

Getting to Know Our Child - Instructions

Purpose: This WorkSheet is designed to help early intervention providers prepare for evaluation/assessment services for either eligibility determination or ongoing assessments performed during a family's participation in the First Steps system on either a periodic or interperiodic basis. By providing information about the child's learning style, play behaviors and successful child management techniques, the family assist the provider to structure the assessment recognizing and incorporating these important considerations into the selection of instruments, location, time of day and approach.

Legal Basis: 34 CFR part 303, Section 303.322 Evaluation and Assessment and Section 303.323 Nondiscriminatory Procedure and Section 303.342 (c) Procedures for IFSP development, review, and evaluation.

Instructions: The family, with assistance as needed from the Intake/Service Coordinator, should provide responses to the questions by giving information that best describes their child and their observations and opinions. This Section helps the family to inform early intervention providers how their child lets them know when something is wrong, and offers the opportunity for the family to talk about their child's favorite activities, attention span, and the best time for their child to be assessed. In addition to providing responses to these questions, the family should be encouraged to provide any additional information that they feel would be beneficial during the assessment and that will make this meaningful and useful for them and other providers. The provider will want to learn from the family about the specific ways that their child plays, needs positioning, or how to keep s/he engaged.

Application: This WorkSheet should be reviewed with the family prior to any formal assessment activities, and revised accordingly. Preparing for the assessment is an important step in the process for both the family and providers. The Intake/Service Coordinator should assist the family in completing this form and/or they can complete it on their own. The family's responses to this WorkSheet help us to know what specific questions the family has, and how to structure the assessment process to address these questions. This WorkSheet is shared with the provider(s) beforehand with a signed Release of Information form obtained prior to release.

1. What s/he really likes (to do, to play with, to calm down with, etc.):

Assessment activities should be conducted recognizing the child's pace, play preferences and toys. The family should identify what the child currently likes to do in play, what frustrates them, how they best learn, and how they are best comforted. Utilizing this information, the provider can enhance the assessment process by maximizing the child's performance through familiar settings and toys.

2. I am most pleased for my child when:

Each family will have a particular story or example of when their child is successful. Sometimes it is succeeding with a development skill, other times when they can communicate to someone that they don't see regularly and be understood. It may also be a routine daily activity – such as bathing – when the child enjoys the bath experience. For some families, their response to this question may be a report such as 'when my child has fewer seizures during the day.'

3. What puzzles or worries me about my child is:

In response to this question, families should be encouraged to ask questions that may be troubling to them. These issues should be considered in the assessment process.

4. My child lets me know what s/he wants by:

How does the child communicate his/her needs to their parents and other family members? Cues such as eye gazing, pointing, grunting, specific cries or body posture can assist the provider to conduct the assessment in a way so as to incorporate these behaviors.

5. I want others to see when s/he:

Sometimes children don't demonstrate their skills to others, due perhaps to stranger anxiety, being in a different environment or the time of day. It is important for these skills to be observed by the provider, and for the family to be able to ask questions about specific skills, quality, intention, etc. Families may have questions about how their child moves to plays and should be able to use the assessment process to have these questions addressed.

6. Better times of the day/week for me and/or for my child are:

In addition to providing the assessment services in the natural environment of the child and family, it is important to conduct this activity when the child is fresh and alert. Working with the family, identify the optimal time of day and week to schedule assessment services.

7. I'd like _____ to be with me at the assessment or have their ideas and questions included.

If the family would like someone to observe the assessment, they should indicate who this is and discuss with the provider how this participation will be structured so as to contribute positively to the assessment process. Other times, a significant family member can't participate but may have questions or concerns. Incorporate these into the overall assessment process as well.

WHAT to look for:	"HOW TO'S" so it will be comfortable for my child and useful for my family and other providers (e.g., toys, activities, pace)
Use this section to summarize what to look for during this assessment based upon family concerns, questions and their ideas. Make certain that these are incorporated into the assessment process and verbally reported/discussed with the family during and after the assessment, and reflected in the written summary of the assessment afterward.	Use this section to discuss the time of day, location and how the child's typical routine (including favorite toys and activities) will be incorporated into the assessment process. Discuss positioning needs, pacing and other related issues that will ensure that this assessment is productive and comfortable for all.